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Houskeepers' Chat

Tuesday, April 22, 1930.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "Salads and Salad Dressings." Information from Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

Bulletins available: "Aunt Sammy's Radio Recipes," and "Eggs At Any Meal."

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Before I begin my discourse on salads and salad dressings, I want to tell you about the man who dared to order an apple -- a raw apple -- for dessert. Could he get it? He traveled all over this broad land of ours, but, except on the rare occasions when he had a foreign waiter, he could not get an apple to eat at dinner without being subjected to a questionnaire which threw him into a fit of nervous rage. Let him tell his story:

"Any dessert?" says the doll-faced waitress in the coffee shop.....

"An apple," I say.

"I beg your pardon," she says . . .

"I want an apple," I repeat.

"To eat?" she asks . . .

"Yes," I say, determined to be calm, "an apple to eat."

At this her smile becomes a broad grin, or, in some cases, frank girlish laughter of the sort that is supposed to enchant the listener.

"A raw apple?" she titters, convinced at last that she has heard aright.

"This dialogue," says the man, "has taken place with remarkable frequency ever since, for my sins, I began a lecture tour of these United States . . . I am thinking of having some large cards printed with the single words, 'A RAW APPLE, PLEASE,' for use on these dreaming, ecstatic waitresses.

"There would not be so much dependent upon this question of apples if there were anything else to eat. But the melancholy fact is that there is nothing else. The desserts are all made of paste, either too quickly frozen, (in individual lumps) or one-quarter baked, bedizened in colored syrups and ices and folderols, the whole masquerading under some such name as Clara Bow Marshmallow Nut. And at the end of a meal which has left me longing for food, I am not one to look kindly upon a Clara Bow Marshmallow Nut."

This man has my sympathy. I have never made a comprehensive tour of the United States, but I remember one time last summer, when, travel-worn and weary, I wanted an apple for dessert.

The waiter brought me a menu card, with a most imposing array of desserts.

"Could I please have an apple?" I looked at the waiter with pleading eyes.

"Just an apple?" said the waiter, incredulously.

"Just an apple, raw," I replied.

"Very well, if madam wishes," said the waiter, and he left the dining room with all the dignity a waiter can command. I could imagine the consternation in the kitchen when he repeated my order: "A lady has asked for an apple -- raw." Or do you suppose he called me a "lady"?

When I began this program, I had in mind a little sermon on simple desserts, and how much more appetizing they are than extra-fancy desserts, but I must hurry along to the subject of salads and salad dressings, for that is my main topic.

In the first place, all salad greens should be served crisp. Wash them thoroughly, first in running water, or by lifting them out of two or three waters. Then wrap them in a cloth, or put them in a clean paper bag. Set them on ice, or in a cool place, to "crisp."

Salads are always more appetizing, when they contain something succulent, to crunch between the teeth -- something crisp like lettuce, celery, cabbage, apples, pickles, watercress, and so forth.

The big secret of a crisp, tasty salad lies in having the ingredients fresh; cold, with no drops of water clinging to the leaves; and carefully combined. When vegetables or fruits are cut up, or diced, the pieces should be large enough so the salad won't be mushy, when the dressing is added. Is there anything more uninteresting, than a soggy, wishy-washy salad? As a general rule, the dressing should not be mixed with the other materials, until just before serving. The dressing tends to wilt the vegetables, and salad greens. Of course there are exceptions to this rule -- potato salad, for example.

The kind of salad dressing to use depends largely upon when the salad is to be served. A light salad, with a heavy dinner, usually needs a light dressing, such as a French dressing. Luncheon or supper salads, or those served with party refreshments, may have the richer dressings, such as mayonnaise, cooked dressing, or cream dressing.

If you have a copy of the Radio Cookbook, you know it contains about two dozen salad recipes, and directions for making cooked salad dressing, sour cream salad dressing, and cheese dressing. However, the cookbook does not include a recipe for mayonnaise dressing. This important recipe you will find on the last page of the leaflet, "Eggs At Any Meal."

I'm going to broadcast this recipe for Mayonnaise dressing, because it's a good one to have on hand. Seven ingredients, for Mayonnaise Dressing:

1 egg yolk	Paprika to taste
2 tablespoons vinegar or lemon juice	1 or 2 drops tabasco sauce, and
1/2 teaspoon sugar	3/4 to 1 cup salad oil.
1/2 teaspoon salt	

Seven ingredients, for Mayonnaise Dressing: (Repeat.)

Mix the seasoning with 1 tablespoon vinegar or lemon juice. Add the yolk of egg, and beat slightly. Then begin adding oil, a teaspoon or two at a time, beating thoroughly each time. When enough oil has been added to make the mixture thick, add the remaining acid, and gradually beat in the rest of the oil.

There are many ways to vary this standard mayonnaise dressing. Do you ever make up a supply of mayonnaise, put it in the ice box, and then add special seasoning to the amount used for one meal? Russian dressing is excellent on a crisp green salad. Russian dressing is mayonnaise plus a little tomato chili sauce, or tomato catsup and lemon juice.

Thousand Island dressing is a standby, for salads. Thousand Island dressing is nothing but mayonnaise, to which are added chopped, highly flavored materials. Often as many as a dozen different ingredients are added in small quantities, cut up into very small pieces. Some suggestions are pickled, olives, celery, green peppers, pimentos, capers, and onion. Use a combination of any of these materials you have on hand.

If you are serving a fruit salad with mayonnaise, add whipped cream to the mayonnaise, and a little extra sugar and salt.

Wednesday: "The Orderly Child."

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